

[illegible]

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

_____ XX is attached hereto

_____ was filed on _____
as U.S. Application No. _____
Serial No. _____

_____ was filed on
as U.S. Application
Serial No.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

Prior Foreign Application(s)

Number :
Country :
Day/Month/Year Filed :
Priority (yes/no) :

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §119(e) of any United States

provisional application(s) as listed below:

Provisional Application No. :
Filing Date :

Provisional Application No. :
Filing Date :

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) or PCT international applications designating the United States of America that is/are listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior application(s) in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information that is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56 and that which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

Application Serial No. :
Filing Date :
Status (patented, pending, abandoned) :

Application Serial No. :
Filing Date :
Status (patented, pending, abandoned) :

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

David M. Crompton, Reg. No. 36,772;
Glenn M. Seager, Reg. No. 36,926;
Brian N. Tufte, Reg. No. 38,638;
Robert E. Atkinson, Reg. No. 36,433;
J. Scot Wickhem, Reg. No. 41,376;
Scott T. Bluni, Reg. No. 40,916;
Mark J. Casey, Reg. No. 37,796;
James R. Chiapetta, Reg. No. 39,634;
Luke R. Dohmen, Reg. No. 36,783;
Peter J. Gafner, Reg. No. 36,517;
Albert K. Kau, Reg. No. 40,672;
Steven A. McAuley, Reg. No. 46,084;
Todd P. Messal, Reg. No. 42,883;
Robert M. Rauker, Reg. No. 40,782; and
William J. Shaw, Reg. No. 43,111

Send correspondence to:

J. Scot Wickhem
CROMPTON, SEAGER & TUFTE, LLC
331 Second Avenue South, Suite 895
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401-2246
(612) 677-9050

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon, I further declare that I understand the content of this declaration.

Full name of sole or first inventor: Brian K. Balzum
Residence: 9905 54th Place #5, Plymouth, Minnesota 55442
Post Office Address: 9905 54th Place #5, Plymouth, Minnesota 55442
Citizenship: US

Inventor's Signature Brian Balzum Date 6-21-01

Full name of second and joint inventor: Anthony C. Vrba
Residence: 18519 83rd Avenue North, Maple Grove, Minnesota 55311
Post Office Address: 18519 83rd Avenue North, Maple Grove, Minnesota 55311
Citizenship: US

Inventor's Signature Anthony C. Vrba Date 7-2-2001

Full name of third and joint inventor: Brice L. Shireman
Residence: 7449 Shenandoah Lane North, Maple Grove, Minnesota 55311
Post Office Address: 7449 Shenandoah Lane North, Maple Grove, Minnesota 55311
Citizenship: US

Inventor's Signature Brice Shireman Date 6-21-01

Full name of fourth and joint inventor: Peter Skujins
Residence: 1708 Irving Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403-2817
Post Office Address: 1708 Irving Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403-2817
Citizenship: US

Inventor's Signature Peter Skujins Date 7-30-01

Full name of fifth and joint inventor: Kenneth M. Merdan
Residence: ~~10310 North 97th Place, Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-3779~~
Post Office Address: ~~10310 North 97th Place, Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-3779~~
Citizenship: US

Inventor's Signature Kenneth Merdan Date 6/28/01

8627 Grace Lane
Greenfield, MN 55357

Full name of sixth and joint inventor: Daniel J. Gregorich

Residence: 4265 5th Avenue North, #103, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58203 Citizenship: US

Post Office Address: 4265 5th Avenue North, #103, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58203

Inventor's Signature _____ Date _____

Full name of seventh and joint inventor: Pu Zhou

Residence: 17838 Steading Road, Eden Prairie, Minnesota 55347 Citizenship: P.R. China

Post Office Address: 17838 Steading Road, Eden Prairie, Minnesota 55347

Inventor's Signature Pu Zhou Date 6/25/01

Full name of sixth and joint inventor: Daniel J. Gregorich

Residence: 4265 5th Avenue North, #103, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58203 Citizenship: US

Post Office Address: 4265 5th Avenue North, #103, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58203

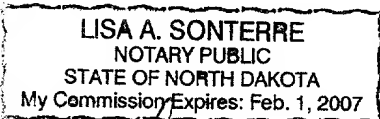
Inventor's Signature *Daniel J. Gregorich* Date 6/25/2001

Full name of seventh and joint inventor: Pu Zhou

Residence: 17838 Steading Road, Eden Prairie, Minnesota 55347 Citizenship: P.R. China

Post Office Address: 17838 Steading Road, Eden Prairie, Minnesota 55347

Inventor's Signature _____ Date _____



Late 6/25/01

§ 1.56 Duty to disclose information material to patentability.

(a) A patent by its very nature is affected with a public interest. The public interest is best served, and the most effective patent examination occurs when, at the time an application is being examined, the Office is aware of and evaluates the teachings of all information material to patentability. Each individual associated with the filing and prosecution of a patent application has a duty of candor and good faith in dealing with the Office, which includes a duty to disclose to the Office all information known to that individual to be material to patentability as defined in this section. The duty to disclose information exists with respect to each pending claim until the claim is cancelled or withdrawn from consideration, or the application becomes abandoned. Information material to the patentability of a claim that is cancelled or withdrawn from consideration need not be submitted if the information is not material to the patentability of any claim remaining under consideration in the application. There is no duty to submit information which is not material to the patentability of any existing claim. The duty to disclose all information known to be material to patentability is deemed to be satisfied if all information known to be material to patentability of any claim issued in a patent was cited by the Office or submitted to the Office in the manner prescribed by §§ 1.97(b)-(d) and 1.98. However, no patent will be granted on an application in connection with which fraud on the Office was practiced or attempted or the duty of disclosure was violated through bad faith or intentional misconduct. The Office encourages applicants to carefully examine:

- (1) Prior art cited in search reports of a foreign patent office in a counterpart application, and
- (2) The closest information over which individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application believe any pending claims patentably defines, to make sure that any material information contained therein is disclosed to the Office.

(b) Under this section, information is material to patentability when it is not cumulative to information already of record or being made of record in the application, and

- (1) It establishes, by itself or in combination with other information, a *prima facie* case of unpatentability of a claim; or
- (2) It refutes, or is inconsistent with, a position the applicant takes in:
 - (i) Opposing an argument of unpatentability relied on by the Office, or
 - (ii) Asserting an argument of patentability.

A *prima facie* case of unpatentability is established when the information compels a conclusion that a claim is unpatentable under the preponderance of evidence, burden-of-proof standard, giving each term in the claim its broadest reasonable construction consistent with the specification, and before any consideration is given to evidence which may be submitted in an attempt to establish a contrary conclusion of patentability.

(c) Individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application within the meaning of this section are:

- (1) Each inventor named in the application;
- (2) Each attorney or agent who prepares or prosecutes the application; and
- (3) Every other person who is substantively involved in the preparation or prosecution of the application and who is associated with the inventor, with the assignee or with anyone to whom there is an obligation to assign the application.

(d) Individuals other than the attorney, agent or inventor may comply with this section by disclosing information to the attorney, agent, or inventor.

(e) In any continuation-in-part application, the duty under this section includes the duty to disclose to the Office all information known to the person to be material to patentability, as defined in paragraph (b) of this section, which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of the continuation-in-part application.

[42 FR 5593, Jan. 28, 1997; paras. (d) & (e) – (i), 47 FR 21751, May 19, 1982, effective July 1, 1982; para. (c), 48 FR 2710, Jan. 20, 1983, effective Feb. 27, 1983; paras. (b) and (j), 49 FR 554, Jan. 4, 1984, effective Apr. 1, 1984; paras. (d) and (h), 50 FR 5171, Feb. 6, 1985, effective Mar. 8, 1985; para. (e), 53 FR 47808, Nov. 28, 1988, effective Jan. 1, 1989; 57 FR 2021, Jan. 17, 1992, effective Mar. 16, 1992; para. (e) added, 65 FR 54604, Sept. 8, 2000, effective Nov. 7, 2000]